The Brethren Evangelist

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ASHLAND COLLEGE

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ASHLAND, O., Dec. 28, 1887.

1888.

We will soon enter upon the year eighteen hundred and eighty-eight. Now is the time to renew your subscription to the EVANGELIST. It will be published the coming year for the same price. Renew your own subscription, kind reader, and send in your neighbor's also. Our list should be increased one third for the year 1888, and we are dependent upon you to help us in the work.

Eighteen Eighty-eight.

This number closes another volume of the EVANGELIST. We have not time to take any retrospective view of the past, and without ceremony commit it to the charge of history and God, without apology or eulogy.

1888 is now before us. How shall we all use it?

We shall do the best we can—

1. To please Jesus, our Lord.
2. To build up and strengthen Gospel Religion.
3. To widen the influence of the Brethren Church.

Lastly, to help ourselves.

What will you do dear reader?

G.

The Evangelist.

We expected before this to hear from Bro. J. W. Beer and make announcements for the coming year in detail. But not a line has he written to relieve our waiting. We expected him to be here, ready to assume his duties Jan. 2nd, 1888.

We make our plans rapidly, but Bro. Beer is deliberate and cautious. We have our year's work mapped out and will execute it if God so wills.

Probably Bro. Beer will drop in on us without notice; we will wait and see. In the meantime let the canvass for the EVANGELIST go on, and a large list of subscribers obtained for 1888. It will be published at $1.50 per year, as usual, and will labor for the Brethren church with all its might.

G.

A German Baptist Surplus. What is to be Done With It?

A MAJORITY OF GERMAN BAPTIST PREACHERS COMPARED TO LEAN COWS, AND THEIR PREACHING TO THIN MILK. THE GERMAN BAPTIST PLAN, NOT THE GOSPEL PLAN.

We clip the following from the Gospel Messenger:

Dear Brother:—

I have read and re-read your articles in the Gospel Messenger concerning the church's duty towards her ministers, and I feel much interested in the work, and now ask you to please answer a few questions that are bearing on my mind.

1. A church has six or seven preachers; some have held the office as many as twenty years, and most of them fifteen years; and yet they cannot preach so as to be interesting and edifying to the congregation. In such a case, what should the church do? Should she elect more preachers, or do with the kind she has?

2. If the church should elect younger ones, how can they improve their talents and wait for their turn to come and preach, and have due respect for the older ones who do not seem to realize that their preaching is not as acceptable as it should be?

3. Should all these ministers be supported? I do not ask these questions to make trouble, but do it with the hope that you may tell us something that may help us by setting us all to thinking, and then perhaps some will see a way to better things. The matter is talked about, but no one wishes to do anything that will cause hard feelings.

A SISTER.

As a rule, we do not give attention to letters like the above, but as the sister presses us for a hearing, we shall comply, with the hope that we may be able to suggest a few points of duty for the consideration of the lay members, as well as to tell them what to do in the case of their ministers.

4. "In such a case, what should the church do?" To answer this question we first ask, What did this church do? Ministers are not of a spontaneous growth, neither do they grow up as darnel. If these ministers have been the choice of the church, and there are too many of them, or not of the right kind, who is to blame,—the ministers, or the church that called them? We think that it is a very plain case where the blame should be located. Our impression is that the first mistake was made by the church. The proper course may not have been pursued in supplying the want of the church. A want for a minister may be felt, but the person having the essential qualifications may not be in the membership. If this is so, in the judgment of the church, an election should not be held. This is a possible condition for a church to be in, and to go ahead and elect a man to be a minister, under such circumstances, is a sad mistake, and cannot fail to produce unhappy results.

Again; another error may have been made on the part of the church in not giving to those elected the proper care and encouragement. If these men were in office from fifteen to twenty years, it is probable that they were called when yet comparatively young,—perhaps just starting out in life, with a family to care for and support. What did the church do for these men? *She elected them*, that is all. And because the electing did not make a preacher out of the first one, the electing process was kept up until seven were elected. And now the question is asked, "Should the church elect more preachers, or do with the kind she has?" If the electing system is to be carried out, go ahead until you have the last one elected. Give the system a fair trial and be convinced that the abuse of it is altogether wrong. If the church had stood by her first minister and given him the care, help and encouragement that was due him, by virtue of the position in which he was placed, the chances are that seven would not have been called. To illustrate our point, we knew two farmers, the one kept two cows, and the other five, but the two-cow farmer got more milk and made more butter than the one who had five, and that, too, with less feed. The principle is, that two well-fed cows will produce more and better milk than five poorly fed. Apply this principle to the ministry, and two well-cared for ministers will do more and better work than five, who, instead of receiving sympathy, get nothing but discouragements.

If these seven ministers have been called by the church in which they live, and are doing the best they can, the church ought to be satisfied with them, and try to make them better by helping and encouraging them. There is no class of men that are more deserving and need more sympathy than the minister. Good words will not hurt him, and a little judicious praise will add greatly to the life and force of his sermons. Tell a minister that he cannot preach, and he can make himself believe that the opinion is general,—and he can't. Such cold water will put out the fire of any soul, be it ever so warm.

2. If the church, in connection with the officials, should deem it proper and necessary to elect younger ones, they will in all probability, have sufficient opportunity to exercise the talents they may possess. Unless the church has work for more ministers, and intends to do her part towards them, don't elect. If you now have seven uncared-for ministers, don't get any more until you, in some way, dispose of some that you now have, unless you intend to make a fair division of the work by making preachers of your whole eligible membership.

3. "Should all these ministers be supported?" Yes; just as far as they deserve and need it. If they do not give the calling any extra time and labor, they do not deserve any support outside of the sympathy and encouragement that belongs to the calling. Very few churches can afford to give financial support to seven ministers. Such churches must be satisfied with lean cows and thin milk, unless the pasture field is very large. Milk comes from food. The animal from which it is taken is the machine that makes it, therefore the owner of the milk is the one that provides the machine and furnishes the food. If the machine only is provided, there can be no milk for the owner. If the church provides the minister and gives no food, how can she expect milk?

Now, we have given you a few thoughts to start you to thinking. Think carefully, and then act considerately, and some good may come out of it.

REMARKS.

With the exceptions of the comparison in No. 3, we can agree with what is written above, and we give it place in the EVANGELIST because it will apply to a very few of our Brethren churches where the German Baptist idea has not been entirely eliminated. The state of affairs described above by the "Sister" is true to the letter and describes the condition of ninety-nine hundredths of the German Baptist churches, and presents a greater barrier to progress, for that church, than all other bad features of the German Baptist*ism* combined.

The remedy proposed above is the only proper one to be pursued, and yet is altogether impracticable.

If the attempt should be made to select one of the seven ministers above named, and he be supported that he could devote his entire time to the work of the ministry, and the other six be relegated to private life, it would stir up such a racket by the other six and their respective friends and admirers, that would cause about seven divisions in that particular congregation, and would end by an Annual Meeting committee being called in which would at once decide that the paying of a minister was contrary to the usages and the decisions of Annual Meeting, and must not be.

The Eastern Editor should know better than to advise "Sister" to engage in an undertaking that will only bring her into trouble. He should have told sister that she was getting too progressive for the peace of the Church and she should seek a home in the Brethren church, where she evidently belongs.

E. L. Y.

"Other-Worldliness."

George Elliot accused the majority of Christians of "other-worldliness." This great writer had a profound insight into the human heart, and she was right. We are always accusing a great many persons of "this-worldliness," and she said we were guilty of "other-worldliness." According to her meaning, we are so much absorbed in our own personal salvation, and in efforts to secure the personal salvation of other individuals that we neglect a great many of our earthly and home duties. We see this around us in every feature. When a man will run over the country, trying to convert others, while he wilfully neglected his own family and his duty to home.

There are every-day duties that need our attention and when we will neglect these for to attend to some church duty we are guilty of "other-worldliness." "Other-worldliness" is the curse of religion and is doing much to make skepticism. We need religion and Christianity to enter into every avenue of life. It is not enough to merely assent to the Bible, go to prayer meetings, and sing hymns, he must carry his religion into his home, on the street, to his store or shop. To do all this is a greater achievement of Divine grace than to sing and pray in public.

The awful impeachment of Herbert Spencer when he refers to the dark hour in which the whole earth was raging with Satanic passion, and to the deeds of darkness that were done by those who called themselves followers of the Prince of Peace. This accusation is not without foundation. Here we are living in a professed Christian land, and yet for every Christian missionary we send to Africa, we send 10,000 barrels of liquor. Who is to blame? It is the individual Christian who is so absorbed in the affairs of his particular church, that he has neither time nor inclination to attend to general matters.

This is what we mean by "other-worldliness." We should not permit these religious duties to obliterate our duty to common humanity. And until we arouse to a sense of this duty to society in general, Christianity will not answer the purpose of its institution.

M.

The College and Sharp.

We publish the records of Charter and deeds of Ashland College on the inside this week, which takes up two more pages. We deemed it necessary to publish the records so that every one may know what he is working for, when he is working for the College—what our claim to the property rests upon. An article will also be found, by Bro. Brown, which will answer as a conclusion to the matter considered, as Prof. Sharp is the one who was instrumental in creating the distrust about the right of those who donated to the College, to control it, more than any other one, and he has *pulled* about enough *wool* over people's eyes. Suspicions have been reflected upon the honest, well-meaning brethren here long enough, and we should defend the honor of honorable Christian men, against misrepresentation and insinuations in the best way we can, when it becomes a Christian duty to do so. The New Testament makes every man's character stand upon its own record, and we should do so too, when it concerns the public and the welfare of people. Bro. Brown is honest in his confession that Sharp is sharp.

G.

Our Wish.

Our readers noticed last week that Bro. Edward Mason, one of the editors of this paper, was married. We passed the event in a quiet way, as great men are sometimes modest. Nevertheless, we wish Brother and Sister Mason much joy and happiness, as they journey together across the troubled sea of life.

G.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Editor Brumbaugh has been looking through the Report of the Conference of the Progressive Brethren, and could find nothing worthy of notice except that there already existed in "their ranks a fair sprinkling of the divergent element." And from his comments the readers of the *Messenger* could easily infer that the Brethren were upon the eve of division. It seems to us that it can scarcely be possible that any man whose intellect is well balanced could draw such a conclusion from reading the Report.

The Convention demonstrated that the Brethren church was more firmly united on its great principles than any other church in Christendom. Human leadership and human laws were at once ignored by the convention, and the only "divergent element" noticible in the convention was a divergance from all the elements of division and a union on the only foundation upon which a union is practicable the Gospel of Christ.

A brother from Covington, Ohio, writes us that Eld. Quinter is holding a meeting there, with prospects of some success, and don't pay much regard to the order. We would suppose that he would be very particular in that respect.

Eld. S. M. Good, of San Diego, Cal., is certainly doing faithful work for the Lord. During the past year he took part in 390 meetings. He preached four times every Sunday.

A writer in the *Herald of Gospel Liberty* says that there is no denomination among the Protestant denominations that has a creed that is binding upon the consciences of the people. At first though this statement would seem to be false, but little reflection will cause one to assent to the proposition. They are not binding because the churches that have them do not require their applicants for membership to believe and obey them. Creeds exist, but they are only obeyed when it comes handy to do so, and they are only enforced when some one desires to take advantage of an opponent.

Last week we received Bro. Shaver's announcement of a church dedication on Wednesday, with the request to have it in last week. The EVANGELIST is printed on Tuesday morning.

We take up two more pages this week with a further explanation about the College. We will now be content to leave this matter rest, unless further information is asked for by some one.

A creed war is now in progress in Constantinople. There are about half a dozen missionaries there, each one teaching Christianity according to his creed, and they are beginning to covet the same field of work; hence the war. The easiest way out of the difficulty is to kill the creed, and then the missionaries can aid each other.

Sister Mary Sterling is as enthusiatic as ever in the work of preparing for the organization of Sister's Societies of Christian Endeavor.

The communication from Bro. Swihart is a very interesting one. Some of the German Baptist elders are doing a good work for the Brethren church.

"Topics for Prayer Meetings," is the name of a beautiful little book issued by the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association, for use in 1888. They can be secured from the publishers. The International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations, 52 East 23rd St., New York City, at cost price, five cents per copy, or 50 cents per dozen.

Is it Worthwhile?

In reading the two full pages in last No. of EVANGELIST (51) I almost audibly asked myself the question. Is it worth while to devote so much space to so dead a subject as the one Bro. Bailey treated?

Really if any man that ever figured conspicuously in the Ashland church and school deserves to be consigned to oblivion, that man is S. Z. Sharp. He deceived the Dunkard fraternity in and around Ashland regardless of sect or faction. He deceived the